DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 347 606 CS 507 884

AUTHOR Sperrazza, Susan S.
TITLE Increasing Global Awareness in the First Grade Classroom by Advocating the Awareness of Self and the Cultural Differences of Others.
PUB DATE 92
NOTE 60p.; Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Class Activities; *Cultural Awareness; Cultural Context; *Cultural Differences; *Global Approach; *Grade 1; *Multicultural Education; Primary Education; Self Concept; Social Studies; *Student Attitudes; Thematic Approach
IDENTIFIERS Cultural Sensitivity; *Global Awareness; Self Awareness

ABSTRACT

A practicum aimed to increase global awareness in the first grade classroom. The problem was that the students were very "Americanized," predominantly white, and rarely exposed to other cultures. Therefore, the students could not recognize commonalities among people and could not understand the cultural differences in others. The major goal was to increase global awareness in all five first grade classrooms by advocating the similarities of self and the cultural differences of others using a thematic, integrated approach. Language-experience charts, portfolios, charts, and student journals were used during the implementation phase to document student growth. The results of the practicum were very positive. All four objectives were successfully reached and surpassed the original expectations. The outcome of the project was demonstrated through improved student attitudes, new friendships, and positive behaviors toward other students and among the five first grade teachers. The students are now more aware of their own needs, and the similarities and differences of others. (Three appendixes--teacher interview questions and personal observation/sample statements--and 17 references are attached.) (Author/PRA)

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INCREASING GLOBAL AWARENESS IN THE FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM BY ADVOCATING THE AWARENESS OF SELF AND THE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES OF OTHERS

by

Susan S. Sperrazza

Cluster 37

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A Practicum II Report presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University

1992

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Jan Leggett

Jan Leggett

Grade Group Chairman

Title

Longwood, Florida

Address

June 5, 1992

Date

This practicum report was submitted by Susan S. Sperrazza under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in the Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

July 7, 1992
Date of Final Approval Report

June S. Delano
Dr. June S. Delano
Adviser

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer would like to gratefully acknowledge the first grade teachers at the elementary school. Through their support they helped make this practicum feasible and a success. A special thank you to the principal, because without her dedication and support to the project this practicum would not have been possible.

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ABSTRACT

Increasing Global Awareness In The First Grade Classroom By Advocating The Similarities of Self and Cultural Differences of Others. Sperrazza, Susan, S., 1992: Practicum II Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Descriptors: Global Awareness/Elementary Schools/Global Education/Cultural Awareness/First Grade Education/Global Approach/Social Studies/Anti-Bias Curriculum

This practicum aimed to increase global awareness in the first grade classroom. The problem was that the students were very "Americanized", predominantly white, and rarely exposed to other cultures. Therefore, the students could not recognize commonalities among people e.g. all people need food, have hair, need shelter, and they could not understand the cultural differences of others.

The major goal was to increase global awareness in all five first grade classrooms by advocating the similarities of self and the cultural differences of others utilizing a thematic, integrated approach. Language-experience charts, portfolios, charts, and student journals were used during the implementation phase to document student growth.

The results of the practicum were very positive. All four objectives were successfully reached and surpassed the original expectations. The outcome of the project was demonstrated through inproved student attitudes, new friendships, and positive behaviors toward other students and among the five first grade teachers. The students are now more aware of their own needs, the similarities and differences of others including the cultural differences.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Work Setting and Community

The setting for this practicum was a sixteen year old public elementary school in a rural community. The buildings were literally moved to its present setting in 1974, but officially opened in January, 1976. It was one of twenty-eight elementary schools in the district, and as of September, 1990, the enrollment was 944 students. Due to overcrowding, it was anticipated that 88 students would be rezoned to a new elementary school in the area. There were several portables on campus to house the extra students. The September 1991 projection was 856 students. They were heterogeneously placed in five kindergartens, five first grades, six second grades, six third grades, six fourth grades, and six fifth grades.

The school served various exceptionalities such as: gifted, specific learning disabilities, emotionally handicapped, speech and language. The school has had two gifted units for the last seven years, but the new projection was for one gifted unit.

There were two specific learning disabilities programs, one primary and one intermediate.

Forty teachers worked on staff: twelve special area teachers and twenty-eight classroom teachers with a wide variety of socio-economic and educational backgrounds. Each first grade teacher had at least seven years teaching experience at this grade level. The classroom teachers taught all subject areas using a variety of approaches. The emphasis during the year was on the whole language approach and the integrated curriculum. The school had one part-time English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher that served the foreign students one hour per day, five days a week. During the past few years, the school had served as a training center for interns from the local universities.

The socio-economic level was basically white middle-to upper-middle class students. Ninety-eight percent of the students lived in homes owned by their parents. Many of the families had migrated from other states to this area. A recent increase in the student population was due to the influx of people moving to the locale from other countries. The school was 94 percent white; however, within the past year the number of foreign students enrolled at the school had more than doubled. The state had recently mandated

that due to the increased number of multicultural students entering the writer's school system, teachers must be trained to teach ESOL students by June 30, 1994.

Parent interaction with students and faculty members was strong through an active Local School Advisory Board (LSAC) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The LSAC and PTA groups met monthly to discuss general school problems and give input to the administration on curriculum development and policy revisions. Both groups continually assisted and supported the teachers.

As of the 1990-1991 school year, standardized tests were no longer administered to every grade level of the school. The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) was given in the second and fourth grades, whereas the Student State Assessment Tests (SSAT) was given in the third and fifth grades. The social studies scores on the CTBS averaged at the 60th percentile for the past five years with the 50th percentile as the national average.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer is a certified elementary schoolteacher with eighteen years teaching experience. A Bachelor of Arts degree was earned in 1970 in Early Childhood; a Master of Arts degree was earned in 1977

in Elementary Education; an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership was earned in 1987. The writer also has certification to teach gifted education and to train teachers for ESOL training, having received special inservice training in global education at a summer geography institute offered by the local school district.

During the 1991-1992 school year, the writer was assigned to teach first grade. At this site, the writer has previously taught kindergarten and gifted education and has served as grade-group chairman. The implementation of this practicum in the writer's classroom also involved training the other first grade teachers to use the information in their classrooms.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The children in this elementary school lived in a predominantly white world. The students were very Americanized and rarely exposed to other cultures, living in isolated, segregated communities. The writer considered them sheltered from the outside world and less racially mixed than students of inner city schools. As a result, it was very difficult for the first graders to understand other people besides themselves lived in this world.

The problem was that the students could not conceptualize the commonalities among people e.g., all people need food, shelter, clothes or all people have hair etc. Students also difficulty recognizing the differences among themselves and among other cultures.

Problem Documentation

Evidence of the problem in the first grade classroom was documented in several ways. On the 1990-1991 CTBS test, scores for second grade indicated that the social studies scores were only slightly higher

than the national percentile. The scores at the school averaged at the 60th percentile for the past five years with the 50th percentile as the national average. However, on all other subject areas of the CTBS test, the students scored at or above the 90th percentile.

Another method of documentation was through personal interviews with the five first grade teachers. The general attitude and responses were the same for all five first grade teachers. They disclosed that they were experiencing problems and many questions from first graders when foreign students were placed in their classrooms. They also stated that they felt with the increase of foreign students entering the school, it was necessary to increase global awareness starting at the first grade level. They believed with the new whole language curriculum it was necessary to treat social studies as an integrated curriculum using a thematic approach. However, even though the teachers expressed a desire to spend more time on social studies, they felt guilty spending time on global awareness when they had so much to teach. Previously, it had been taught as a separate subject (see Appendix A).

According to this writer's personal observation, it was evident that first grade students did not understand the similarities and differences of people from other places. From the statements children made it was

apparent that they were confused about the differences of others (see Appendix B).

A personal interview with the principal of the school indicated that global awareness was a top priority for all grade levels. She stated "to increase global awareness has been listed as a school goal and a part of the school's comprehensive plan since 1989". She had dedicated part of the school budget and applied for grants in order to purchase new "hands-on" social studies equipment such as globes and maps.

Recent research literature indicated that American education has overlooked the need for increased global awareness until recently. This was a deficiency in the educational system and at the writer's setting. Tye (1991) was only one of many researchers that indicated the lack of global awareness was a problem. He stated that American students, at all grade levels were not prepared for the changing world of the twenty-first century.

Causative Analysis

The problem had occurred because of several factors. One of the major causes of this problem was that the students were not trained to understand the differences and similarities of other people. It was difficult for students to understand the cultural differences of others, if they did not understand the

similarities among themselves. The difficulty began when learning about "self" was taught in isolated situations.

The students at the writer's work setting lived in predominantly all-white neighborhoods and were rarely exposed to other cultures as students of inner city schools. However, there was an increased number of students from foreign countries that enrolled in the school, which was creating the problem.

When teachers taught social studies, particularly geography, it was taught as an isolated part of the curriculum and was not integrated with other subject areas. Not only did the teachers treat social studies separately, but the curriculum treated social studies as an isolated subject. Teachers had difficulty making the transition to integrate global awareness.

The first grade teachers were interested in teaching social studies, but little emphasis was placed on the subject area. Teachers had so much material to cover, that they did whatever was necessary to teach the curriculum and to produce grades for the report card. Teachers had little time to expound on global awareness; they had not given themselves permission to have fun with the subject, to use hands-on materials, and to have children learn at the same time.

Research Literature

A great deal of research over the past few years elaborated on the importance of understanding this "shrinking world" and acknowledging the lack of global awareness in today's schools. Parker (1991) stated that the term global awareness is a confusing term. To some it means political, ecological, technological, social, economic, or geographic awareness, but regardless of the jargon it must be discussed, not as a reform but as an answer to a widespread concern of the changing world. The American society is becoming more pluralistic in nature and more globally interdependent. Allen (1986) stated that according to the latest census, there is a continuing arrival of large groups of refugees coming to this country. It is very probable teachers and students will be exposed to first- and second-generation immigrants. Many Americans are ignorant of the population around them. Allen felt there is a need for teachers as well as students to become familiar with other cultures, and to learn how to deal with cultural problems as they arise.

The world, especially the United States, is at critical crossroads. Tye (1991) believed that it will be a challenge for our society to survive these changes. He also stated that it is the major role of the schools through global education to facilitate the process of

adapting to the changes. The United States is the most ethnocentric country in the world. Tye and Kniep (1991) claimed that Americans tend to believe that anyone that is not American is deficient. Americans learn to overlook the similarities of others, yet most schools do not prepare the students to recognize the common wants and needs. Without global education, students may never be exposed to the similarities and differences of others. They stated,

> Global education involves learning to understand and appreciate our neighbors with different cultural backgrounds from ours; to see the world through the eyes and minds of others; and to realize that all peoples of the world need and want much the same things (p. 47).

Students bring into the classroom preconceived ideas of people. Derman-Sparks et al. (1989) stated that children "learn by observing the differences and similarities among people and by absorbing the spoken and unspoken messages about those differences" (p. ix). These messages and beliefs are usually learned from others or from home. For example, two five-year old boys played in a sandbox. A Vietnamese boy wanted to join them, but when he asked the white boys if he may play with them, they chanted "Nah, nah, nah, you can't play with us, you're Chinese." They pulled on their own eyes making fun of the Vietnamese boy. This was a behavior they had seen before and then acted out.

Derman-Sparks used another example, an Asian child refused to hold the hand of a Black person because he felt his hand was dirty. He insisted on washing his hand to clean it. All children are harmed by this type of insensitive behavior and lack of cultural information.

According to Rigg and Allen (1989), students do not understand the similarities and individual differences of others. It is not only important for teachers to accept the similarities and differences among children in the classroom, but it is important for the children to acknowledge and understand them as well. Gollnick and Chinn (1986) stated that unfortunately, many American students believe that anyone that is culturally different from themselves are inferior or primitive. "Educators have the responsibility for knowing the cultural backgrounds of their students to help them reach their full potential" (p. 5). But many teachers fail to understand the cultural factors. Sensitive teachers will facilitate this understanding if they recognize the need for students to be empathetic to these differences and emphasize the commonalities (Welton & Mallan, 1988).

An increasing number of teachers are identifying that the lack of global awareness as a problem. Kirkwood (1987) reflected on her six years experiences

working in the Dade County school district in Miami, Florida. The segregated areas are now experiencing frequent refugee arrivals from Nicaragua, Cuba, Haiti etc. Affluent white residents are found living adjacent to non-white poverty-stricken neighborhoods. The schools are becoming increasingly ethnically mixed. In order to meet the needs of the constantly changing student population, with its ethnic diversity including language and culture, she believes that schools need to increase global awareness to peacefully adjust to the population changes. She feels that schools are the agents that can bring about effective social change, but change requires the total commitment from teachers and administrators.

Derman-Sparks et al. (1989) revealed that children notice racial and physical differences and begin to classify at an early age. Children also develop self-identity and attitudes. In many cases young children refuse to interact with other children who are different from themselves, causing a major problem in the classroom. For this reason, there is a need for anti-bias education with young children. Educators should take the direction of incorporating racial awareness in the classroom, allowing children to learn about their own culture and also applying a bicultural

and a bicognitive approach. Derman-Sparks et al. (1989) further certified,

> Contact with children of various backgrounds is not enough...if children are to grow up with attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary for effective living in a complex, diverse world, early childhood programs must actively challenge the impact of bias on children's development (p. 5).

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The major goal of this practicum was to prepare all the first grade students at the writer's setting for the twenty-first century and to be sensitive to the needs of others. The writer planned to increase the students' global awareness and expand the first graders' perception of the world. The children lacked a base of understanding and awareness of self and others. The students did not recognize the commonalities and multicultural differences of other people.

Behavioral Objectives

The specific goals of this practicum were as follows:

1. To increase the students' global awareness through an integrated curriculum for all first graders as measured by language experience charts. The preliminary charts made during the first month of implementation will be compared to the knowledge gained on the last month's language experience charts.

Teacher judgment will be used to compare information.

2. All first graders will have an increased awareness of the commonalities of people as measured through the use of portfolios. Portfolios will be kept by the teacher of the students' works from the first month of implementation to the last. The teacher will use professional judgment to measure the growth.
3. All first graders will be able to conceptualize the differences of students from a multicultural background as measured by charts made at the beginning and at the end of implementation. The students will brainstorm, and the teacher will list the differences of various cultures among people. The teachers will compare the lists from the beginning of the year to the end of the year results.
4. All five first grade teachers will implement global awareness instruction in their classrooms as measured by a follow-up interview.

Measurement of Objectives

The measurement of Objectives One, Two, and Three was a subjective measure since teacher judgment was to

be used to judge the students' growth during the eight months of implementation. The language experience charts, portfolios, and charts made at the beginning and end of the year were compared to measure the students' progress.

The measurement of Objective Four was an ongoing process, since the first grade teachers were implementing global awareness instruction throughout the year. The five teachers answered the interview questions at the close of the 1990-1991 school year (see Appendix A). Teacher responses clarified a need to increase global awareness using a thematic, integrated approach. The writer evaluated the success of implementation after all five teachers integrated global awareness into all areas of the curriculum, measured by a follow-up interview with the first grade teachers (see Appendix C).

The writer kept a journal to record the progress, any unexpected events or problems, teacher input, and noteworthy statements the students said during implementation. The writer met weekly with the first grade team to discuss and monitor implementation progress. If any curriculum problems occurred during implementation, the writer worked with the first grade teacher(s) to solve the problem(s) and offered assistance.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

The problem at the writer's elementary school was the first grade students lacked global awareness. They were unable to note the similarities of self and the cultural differences of others. Many possible solutions were gleaned from the literature. Tye (1991) suggested to increase global awareness, global education must begin at the school site with the classroom teacher being the most critical person to take action. It should be infused in all curriculum areas. He stated: "Global education involves learning about those problems and issues that cut across national boundaries" (p. 5). He believed that it is necessary to teach global awareness so students may view individuals and groups in a different perspective by recognizing the commonalities and differences.

Parker (1991) suggested that the purpose of a global awareness program is to extend the social studies content from a self-centered focus, to an emphasis on how people are different, yet interact and depend on one another. He illustrated a holistic-interactive social studies curriculum that can be taught at any grade level

from kindergarten to the twelfth grade. A pilot program in Miami indicated a global education program can make a difference and increase the students' global awareness. Kirkwood (1987) described the elementary school and the schoolwide effort including parents and community to increase global awareness. Each month a different grade level studied a different country. Kindergarten studied Kenya; first graders studied Brazil; second, Australia; third, Ireland; fourth, China; fifth, The United States; and sixth grade France. The grade levels made books of all the cultural information collected. The customs, food, dress, music, and folk tales were some items studied. The culminating activity at the end of the year was a school presentation and performances.

When teaching a global awareness program teachers should identify the global resources available in the community in order to help teachers and students understand customs and beliefs of other cultures. The use of human resources assists the students in the realization that all Americans have an ethnic heritage. Resource speakers can provide opportunities for students to understand their heritage and the heritage of other ethnic groups represented in the classroom, school, and community (Arambulo, 1987).

Rigg (1986) discussed topics and developmentally appropriate approaches suitable to use with young

students. She suggested that the Language Experience Approach (LEA) uses the whole language or the students' ideas phrased in their own words. Rigg listed topics of interest to children are foods, family, and crafts.

According to Genishi (1988), developmentally appropriate practices and a diversity of materials in the classroom such as maps, globes, and field trips characterize effective programs. An integrated approach to learning, learning that is not separated from dramatic play, music, science, math, health, social studies, is the way children learn best. Children learn in a "hands-on", experienced-based way.

"The integrated thematic approach to learning... provides opportunities for children to learn to think and collaborate as they actively explore their subject matter" (Glover, 1990, p. 155). Glover is a first grade teacher who gave her class the chance to study Japan using the whole-language integrated approach. The class read stories, folk tales, and whatever they could find to research their subject. Glover reminded the readers the program was a success, but it is important to remember "that children need the security of the familiar to grasp the unknown" (p. 159).

The technique of using portfolios brings a link between instruction and the application of knowledge. Paulson, Paulson, and Meyer (1991) emphasized that

portfolios can be used to study any subject area and "can become the window into the students' head". Included in a portfolio can be a collection of a variety of writings, autobiographies, biographies, reports, drawings, and articles including a collection of cultural information.

One study indicated that exercises such as pattern drills, yes-no questions, flashcards, and worksheets do not encourage self-expression and are a waste of time for both the teachers and students. These exercises do not allow teachers to know their students (Rigg & Allen, 1989).

Derman-Sparks et al. (1989) stated that most global awareness programs study multiculturalism as a tourist curriculum. Educators should first emphasize cultural differences and similarities among the all-White children, then foster an empathetic awareness of cultural differences and similarities of others. "White children may be the most in need of learning about the differences that exist in the American society" (p. 7). For example, all white children do not celebrate Christmas, Halloween, or Easter. Derman-Sparks et.al. also suggested activities that can be used with young children to begin studying white and other cultures: "Who is in your family?"; "Who is in your community?"; "What do families eat?"; "How do family members work?".

A planned global awareness program may be taught and integrated into the curriculum through a thematic approach. McLane (1991) and her first grade co-workers compared the American and Russian cultures. The first grade classes began by studying the similarities and differences of families, holidays, and animals. The children also studied common folk and fairy tales, for example, Cinderella and Vasilisa. Students wrote books, drew pictures, and sent them to their Soviet friends. The project's culminating activities included a visit by eight Russian students to the United States in the spring, and a visit to Russia by eight American children the following summer.

> When we began, we envisioned the outcomes of this special yearlong curriculum exchange to be an appreciation of our similarities, a celebration of our differences, and the laying of the foundation for lifelong learning as world citizens of the 21st century. We believe we reached those outcomes" (McLane, 1991, p. 60).

Teleconferencing is a new technological tool that allows students from different parts of the country or from different countries to communicate. It is becoming increasingly popular in the elementary schools. LeBaron and Warshawsky (1991) used satellite conferencing between middle school students in Massachusetts and Germany. The students shared their feelings about sports, food, fashion, music, school life, and parent/teen relationships. Previously, the staff and

students communicated via electronic mail. The students reported that Kids Interactive Telecommunications Experience by Satellite (KITES) exchange was a success and a fascinating learning experience.

Description of Solution Selected

Research revealed that to increase global awareness is a necessity for students to survive in the twenty-first century (Tye, 1991). "In terms of human potential, the classroom contains two major sources for influencing behavior and development: the teacher and the children themselves" (Brofenbrenner, 1970, p. 153). The writer proposed to combine several ideas gleaned from literature while working with her class and the additional four first grade teachers. In choosing the solutions, the writer not only based the instruction on the cognitive, social, and psychological development of the students, but also extended the instruction into all parts of the curriculum, such as reading/language arts, mathematics, and science. The program was taught as an integrated curriculum using a thematic approach on a monthly basis, and continued throughout the school year (Mclane, 1991). In order to achieve the desired level of success of the program, it was necessary to progress logically from concept to concept and to use developmentally appropriate materials (Geneshi, 1988).

Derman-Sparks et al. (1989) suggested not to teach global awareness as a tourist curriculum. Therefore, the first grade began by comparing the similarities of self and the common needs of the students in the classroom. The students then advanced to studying the similarities and differences of people around the country.

As suggested by Kirkwood (1987) each first grade class choose one country per class and studied it for the duration of implementation. The students compared the cultural similarities and differences of other countries including the customs, holidays, foods, shelters, and clothes. The teachers utilized language experience charts, portfolios, writing charts, folk tales, and community resources to increase global awareness (Paulson, Paulson & Meyer, 1991; Rigg, 1986; Kirkwood, 1987; Arambulo, 1987).

The writer trained and assisted the other first grade teachers to implement the program in their classrooms. All the necessary materials and activities were gathered, coordinated, developed, and shared by the writer. Lesson plans were written, which provided class time to teach and implement, measure the growth, and implement the activities throughout the year. All global awareness ideas were shared with other members of the team, and a general enthusiastic attitude existed

among the first grade teachers that facilitated implementation. The principal was also receptive and supportive; she cooperated, whenever possible to make the project feasible.

The writer used the expertise of immigrant parents and community leaders as part of the human resources available to make the project work. Resource people were invited to speak to the children as well as to provide "hands-on" experiences.

Report of The Action Taken

Implementation of the practicum began in September at the start of the 1991-1992 school year and continued throughout the year for eight months. A thematic approach was used to teach the objectives using an integrated curriculum for 150 first grade students. To facilitate implementing the strategies, the activities were carried out on a monthly schedule. Each teacher was provided with a copy of the monthly activities. During the first month the implementor trained the five first grade teachers and shared with them the agenda and plans of the project. The writer did not change the first grade curriculum, only the delivery system. The teachers continued to meet weekly to discuss ideas.

The students first learned all about self. They noted such things as their body, the five senses, their favorite things, and the family. Following this,

students compared themselves to other students in the classroom examining similarities, such as the number of children in their family, pets, hair color, and eye color. During these lessons the five teachers wrote the students' ideas on language-experience charts. The students also brainstormed the similarities, while the teacher listed their responses on charts, such as: all people have feet, sleep in beds, wear clothes, have ribs, and need blankets.

During the first month, the students made books of self, family, pets, and favorite things. With the help of the first grade assistant the students wrote bio-poems and wrote a class book about their favorite things. These ideas were graphed and used as a math activity. The writer began keeping a journal of activities to help monitor ideas.

The teachers began keeping portfolios and collected one item per week to help measure the students' progress. The first item was a picture of themselves and they had to write the sentence "This is me". The second was a picture of their family with the sentence "This is my family". The students received no teacher assistance when writing the words.

The second month students continued learning about self and family. However, besides comparing similarities among themselves they included the

similarities of the family (hair, eyes, body size, number of children, hobbies, interests, pets, wants and needs). During this month the community was also introduced. They discussed family occupations, school workers, and community jobs. They compared families and the community occupations around the neighborhood. The students wrote poems, class books, and created self puppets with the help of their family. They graphed the number of children in their family and the most popular pets.

During the third month teachers continued teaching community workers and introduced community workers around the country. However, during this month the teachers emphasized the differences instead of the similarities among themselves, their families, and community helpers. The students listed ideas such as, people wear different shoes and clothes, some people drive cars, have different watches, or eat different lunches.

The students learned that community workers from various parts of the country include a melange of careers. Numerous cultures and customs of Americans across the country were then introduced including: nationalities and skin color, different kinds of families and homes, holidays and religion, and wants and needs.

The teachers shared floor maps to assist the students in locating where people live and to discuss the diverse land forms. For example, some people in America live on islands, some people live on mountains, while others live on beaches. The use of the floor maps facilitated the lessons and enabled the teachers to incorporate map skills. The students compared the seasons and weather, the different time zones, and the clothing needed to exist in the various parts of the country. These concepts were also incorporated into the math and science curriculum.

At this time due to overcrowding in the first grade classes, a new teacher was hired to teach a first/second grade combination class. Since this was a combination class and the teacher was not directly working with the first grade team, the ten children that were moved to the new class were not part of the implementation process.

During the Thanksgiving holiday month, the first grade teachers discussed Pilgrims and Indians. The students learned of the similarities and differences of people living at that time, the reason people moved to this country, working as a community, religions that do not celebrate the holiday, and the Thanksgiving customs in everyone's homes. One of the lessons in the

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writer's class included a matrix with the following information:

Pilgrims	Clothing	Food	Homes
white skin	hats	corn	log homes
	dull colors	fish	Mayflower
Indians	Clothing	Food	Homes
brown skin	headdress	deer	teepees
	pretty colors	buffalo	wigwams

From this, the implementor and the other first grade teachers decided as part of the global awareness program, to provide an unscheduled Thanksgiving breakfast feast. Since there had been a recent influx of immigrants that had moved into the area, the children brought in different foods from their native countries, while the American students brought in foods that represented their foreign background. The feast had a variety of foods, from lox and bagels to egg-filled croissants. The students had fun while learning about similarities and differences of cultures. In past years, no holiday celebrations were permitted, however, the principal was so involved in the project, the first grade teachers were given special permission to do this activity.

During the fourth month the first grade teachers finalized careers with Career Day which enabled the students to dress in their favorite community helper

outfits, graphing the most popular careers. The students continued to read stories about different workers, and viewed films and filmstrips. The teachers were interested in having students begin the writing experience with daily individual journals; content was not stressed during this period. The first grade assistant made journal booklets for each student from half sheets of unlined paper. Unlined paper was provided to allow the students to write freely, rather than being restricted to the lines.

Each teacher introduced one country per first grade classroom during this time. The students gathered information about the cultures of Japan, Italy, Australia, India, and Mexico. The children used a floor map, maps and globes to locate the country they studied. They read stories and folktales, and with the assistance of the music teacher, they sang songs from the country. The art teacher taught the students origami, and created artwork of famous landmarks of the country. The teachers utilized all audio-visual materials necessary, such as videos, movies, filmstrips, and films to help the students visualize the country. The media specialist assisted the teachers with this task. Several parents were travel agents and contributed travel brochures. Since this was the holiday season and not all students celebrate Christmas, the teachers

decided to study holidays around the world as part of the thematic unit.

Throughout the project there was an opportunity for increased parent involvement. Some parents became involved in cooking activities, supplying books and/or brochures from travel agents, or helping the students dress for "Career Day". One parent donated two subscriptions to Country magazine which was used by the first grade team. This no-advertisement magazine enabled the students to travel to different parts of America through pictures.

At the same time the students began studying a country, the guidance counselor and principal gave the writer information about an Olympic Pen Pal Program. This program was initiated by the United States Post Office and the cost was $5.95 per student. For the money the students would receive a folder with stationery, postcards, a pen, and a name of another student from a foreign country of the same age. It was difficult to ask all students for the money to participate, therefore, the writer decided to apply for a mini-grant just for her class to participate. The Post Office worked with the writer, since the grant did not cover the cost of all 27 students in the class, and provided folders and pen pal names to all students. Even though the pen pal program dealt with many

countries, the writer thought it would be a worthwhile experience for the students to pursue. Unfortunately, by the time the mini-grant was approved and the materials were received, it was not until the sixth month of implementation that this part of the program was implemented.

Throughout month five the students continued studying different countries by comparing similarities of the people: their wants and needs, food, shelter, clothing, animals, and family. Cooperative groups were used to brainstorm ideas, make books, and create artwork. The students continued daily journal writing. The teachers also planned for students to begin writing individual books, since the class sizes were large, it was difficult for the teachers to assist each student with creating stories. To accomplish this task the team decided to match up each first grade student with a fifth grade buddy. The fifth grade "buddies" then acted as peer tutors for the young students and removed the roadblock. The students also continued writing in their journals.

In preparation for studying the cultural differences, the first grade classes began discussing the Winter Olympics. The assistant principal knew about the writer's project and presented information about a field trip to see the figure-skating Olympic finalists

at the area's Convention Center. As a special treat, the writer made arrangements for all five first grade classes to see the Olympic finalists at a minimal cost. This was an unscheduled field trip, yet the administration felt it would enhance the program and allowed the students to attend.

At the outset of month six the students began comparing the differences of people in other countries: their wants and needs, food, shelter, clothing, customs, holidays, religion, money, and languages. The students continued to work in cooperative groups to create stories from the information, do related classwork, and create artwork. Journal writing continued throughout the project. To coincide with the activities the students began to write to their pen pals. This enabled the parents to become involved in the project, since all letter writing to the pen pals was done at home. The students and parents were also responsible for mailing the letters. One teacher decided to have a parent teach Spanish to the class; however, the volunteer did not work well with young students, so the idea was terminated after two sessions. During this time the five teachers coordinated plans for the culminating parade activities and made plans to invite guest speakers.

During month seven the students carried on comparing similarities and differences of people. At that time the teachers invited resource people from the community to discuss each country. The teachers solicited the speakers from a list of volunteers distributed by the county which included parents of different nationalities from the writer's school. Speakers were scheduled to come on the same day wearing the garb from each country while speaking to each class. They discussed the foods people eat and brought food samples for the students to taste. They described the cultural dress and discussed the homes, shelters, and schools. Two teachers had extra speakers, parents of students in their classes who had come to visit and speak with their students. They were from the same country the students were studying.

Prior to their visit the students made the national flags, drew pictures of special landmarks from the country, and sang songs. The teachers had planned a food day of the various nationalities, but since the volunteer speakers brought the native food, this task was combined with that activity. All the artwork was saved for the culminating activities of the eighth month. In addition to story writing and journal writing, the writer's class also wrote to their pen pals. The exciting event was when a student received a

letter from their pen pal. At the close of implementation, sixteen students had received letters from their pen pals.

The wrap up and culminating activities accented the similarities and differences of each nation, and were the highlight of the project. The writer discussed the project with the school guidance committee, and with the principal's support the school decided to have a parade of nations in full costume along with all first grade classes around the school's world map. In order to avoid chaos the parade route was distributed to all teachers. While the parade was enroute, the school played the songs "We Are The World" and "Coming To America" on the intercom. The students of all classes waved the national flags of the country they studied.

During each month of implementation, the first grade students were given the opportunity to write poems and stories about the people, read books and write in their journal. At the same time the teachers were measuring the students' growth not only in global awareness but in language arts, math, economics, and science. The last month of implementation the students finished up the portfolios. The teachers made follow-up language experience charts with their class, and the students brainstormed while the teacher listed the similarities and differences of various cultures. All

information was gathered and written on class charts. The teachers noticed the students also were writing paragraphs in their journals instead of letters or words. The end of the school year was a hectic time; however, the teachers compared notes and discussed any interesting events that they encountered. The writer conducted the follow-up interviews with the first grade teachers to wrap up the project (see Appendix C).

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The major problem at the writer's elementary school was the first grade students lacked global awareness. They were unable to note the similarities of self and the cultural differences of others because they lived in a predominantly white world, and were rarely exposed to other cultures. The writer considered them sheltered from the outside world, and less racially mixed than the students of inner city schools. In addition, within the past two years the number of foreign student enrollment had more than doubled at the writer's setting. The students at the elementary school were so Americanized they could not recognize all people have the same needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter. The writer of this practicum used ideas of Derman-Sparks (1989), Kirkwood (1987), McLane (1991) and many new ideas that were spontaneously introduced throughout the project.

The results were analyzed through several methods. The follow-up teacher interviews, the student portfolios, language experience charts, and charts,

indicated the success of implementation. The teachers also decided to use the student journals as an "extra" activity to further assess the students' growth.

Objective One, to increase all first grade students' global awareness through an integrated curriculum using language experience charts, involved teachers soliciting information from the students about the commonalities among themselves and any cultural differences. Language experience charts made at the end of the year displayed that the students' global awareness had increased from the beginning of the year as a result of an integrated curriculum. All students were able to add at least two statements to the language experience charts. This was a subjective measure and all students were able to accomplish this.

According to all five first grade teachers, the incorporation of the thematic approach improved skills in all subject areas. The following are examples of the improvement areas:

Math	(clocks, money, time)
Social Studies	(self, family, neighborhoods, map skills, and community helpers)
Economics	(wants and needs)
Science	(animals, plants, weather, the earth-land forms, and seasons)

Language Arts (vocabulary, creative writing, reading, and spelling)

The use of language-experience charts allowed the students to verbalize their knowledge of similarities and differences, even if they were unable to read or write their responses.

Objective Two stated that all first graders will be able to tell about the commonalities of people as measured by student portfolios. Each week the students added to the portfolio. Every student was able to make an entry to the portfolio each week. All students in the five first classes were able to achieve this with the exception of five newcomers that entered the classes during the seventh month, and the three students that were to be retained.

Objective Three stated all first graders will be able to conceptualize the differences of students from a multicultural background. The charts measured the knowledge gained from the beginning of the year to the end of implementation. All students were able to participate in the brainstorming activity. All teachers stated their students could do this with the exception of five newcomers that entered first grade, and were not part of the project. This number included the retention candidates because the students were able to verbalize their answers instead of writing their thoughts.

Objective Four stated all five first grade teachers will implement global awareness instruction in their classroom. The program will be considered a success if all first grade teachers did this. It will also be considered a success if they all have positive responses on the follow-up teacher interview (see Appendix C). The follow-up interview responses were as follows:

1. All five teachers had enough time to teach global awareness adequately.
2. All five teachers taught the program as part of an integrated curriculum.
3. Only two teachers had foreign students enter their classrooms. However, the new students experienced little difficulty because they both stated they felt the students were better prepared to handle the situation. One teacher had a physically-impaired student enroll in the fourth month. She commented the students accepted her openly due to the program.
4. All five first grade teachers felt it was a "fun" way to teach social studies not only for them but for the students as well.
5. All five first grade teachers want to continue this thematic, integrated approach next year. The same teachers will be teaching first grade.

therefore, implementing the global awareness program would be feasible.

The overall outcome of the project was the students realized that all people have the same basic needs: food, shelter, and clothing. The differences in people are merely on the outside: hair color, skin color, eye color, homes, or speaking other languages. One of the most valuable lessons learned is "one can't judge a book by its cover". It is worthy to note the students in the writer's class developed an understanding of self at the outset of the global awareness project. For example, two boys were fighting because one boy called the other boy black. The class had a follow-up discussion using lead-in questions: "Do you both need food?"; "Do you both live in a house?"; "Do you both have hair, eyes?" The two boys started laughing realizing they were similar, apologized to each other without prompting from the teacher.

It is also noteworthy that students at the writer's setting were unaware all houses do not have pools or beaches in their backyards. Additionally, in all five first grade classes most students' families were born in other states and had migrated to the area. Therefore, when using the floor maps the students were preoccupied and very interested in finding out from which state their family had relocated.

Although this was not a goal, through this project there was an opportunity for increased parent involvement. The parents of the writer's students will continue to assist their children when writing to their pen pals. There were other positive feedback statements made by parents. One parent stated that she felt this was a helpful program because she remembers when she went to school, she cried for days because she had a black teacher. She had never known a black person before, but she knew she felt uncomfortable because the teacher looked different. She had to be moved out of the class.

Another parent mentioned that her physically impaired child had more friends this year than she had in kindergarten. The children treated her like the rest of the students. She felt it was due to the global awareness program.

Discussion

One benefit of this practicum was it allowed all five first grade teachers to work together, share ideas, and plan as a unit. The writer had been on the team for seven years and this was the first time the team got along so well without any competition. It is worthy to note not only did the team act as one unit, but it brought the entire school together as well.

An additional benefit was noted during implementation. The project gave the writer an opportunity to meet weekly with the first grade team to discuss and monitor implementation progress. This articulation is highly recommended to handle any curriculum problems as they occur. The writer worked with the first grade teachers to solve any problems and offered assistance. During implementation, everything went well and as scheduled. The input from the other teachers was highly valued and was instrumental in making the program successful. Through these regular meetings new ideas were continually generated, giving the teachers "permission" to utilize the ideas and to feel comfortable doing so. The writer would like to also note that since the teachers have implemented the program, it will be easier to repeat this project the next year and for the years to follow.

The writer observed that the program was successfully implemented by all five first grade teachers due to the weekly meetings and communication. The materials were used and shared by all first grade teachers. It would facilitate scheduling the use of the materials if each teacher had the sole use of the floor map. It would save time and be more beneficial to the students if it was readily available as needed.

All first grade teachers incorporated global awareness into the first grade curriculum. The writer anticipated a teacher might be moved from the grade level, and was prepared to train and assist the new teacher who would take over the class. The writer did not anticipate the formation of a combination first/second grade class. Therefore, it is necessary to remain flexible to facilitate implementation.

Recommendations

There were several new ideas implemented that were not originally created for the proposal. Several spin-off ideas blossomed as the program progressed and as the students became more interested, such as the Olympic Pen Pal Program, the Olympic figure-skating field trip, and the Thanksgiving feast, all unexpected happenings. The teachers were pleased with the fifth grade buddy idea and plan to implement this again next year. The greatest recommendation would be to entertain the ideas that are feasible and allow for creativity in each classroom. The pen pal program will be continued; however, it is recommended and necessary for teachers to apply for school grants at the end of one school year or the beginning of the next. This would give the teachers enough time to thoroughly analyze the results throughout the school year.

Country magazine was an added bonus to the global awareness project. The writer would recommend a school subscription to this non-advertisement magazine. Pages of the periodical are filled with colorful pictures of America, allowing the students to travel across the country to parts unknown to most students.

Another recommendation would be to continue articulation among the staff, that is, to share ideas and build on them. The discussions between the guidance counselor and the principal, as well as the weekly meetings among the team, helped improve the program. The writer believes using this approach at any grade level or between grade levels would allow for greater communication prove to be beneficial. The media specialist knew about the program and bought a new global awareness teaching program, PC Globe, that can be used on an IBM computer by all grade levels. Additionally, the writer serves on the school's technology committee and has recommended to the committee to purchase a modem and phone line to begin a teleconferencing program with local schools, schools across the country, and around the world. The committee has accepted this idea and plans to purchase a modem, a phone line, and a teleconferencing program.

The idea of having a parent volunteer teach a foreign language was optimistic; however, for future

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events it would be necessary to use volunteers recommended by the school board. Just because a person speaks a foreign language does not mean they can teach it especially to young children. It would be important for the resource person to be trained in working with students.

The writer was very optimistic at the beginning of the practicum; however, the project surpassed all expectations. The results were much greater than anticipated.

Dissemination

The practicum will be shared with the faculty and staff at the writer's elementary school. A copy will also be placed in the school's professional library with administrative approval. The practicum was also presented for consideration to the Disney Teacheriffic Awards, and was one of the finalists in the tri-county area.

The practicum was discussed with the first grade team from another elementary school in the area. The teachers are interested in implementing the global awareness program as part of their first grade curriculum next year. The project will also be made available to other first grade teachers of other schools through networking within the district and/or state.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO FIRST GRADE TEACHERS

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1. Do you feel there is a need to increase global awareness in the first grade classroom?
   a. Why or why not?
2. Do you feel you have enough time to teach social studies adequately?
3. Do you like teaching social studies?
4. Do you use a thematic approach to social studies?
5. Are you incorporating social studies as part of an integrated curriculum or is it taught as a separate subject?
6. Do you feel the social studies guide treats the social studies curriculum as a separate subject or as an integrated curriculum?
   a. Why?
7. Are you experiencing any difficulties with the new foreign students entering your classroom?
   a. If yes, what are they?

APPENDIX B

PERSONAL OBSERVATION/SAMPLE STATEMENTS

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PERSONAL OBSERVATION/SAMPLE STATEMENTS

1. A student heard another child speaking Korean to his mother. He asked the writer if they were speaking Spanish. When the teacher explained he was speaking Korean because that is what is spoken in Korea, he seemed surprised and puzzled. He was under the impression that anyone that speaks a foreign language is speaking Spanish.

2. On a field trip to the city to attend a play, the bus drove through a predominately black neighborhood. A child screamed out on the bus, "Look at all the black people!" She then asked, "Why are there black people in the world?"

3. There is a student on campus from Iran who wears a turban on her head. One first grader asked if she had any hair under the hat. Another child thought she was wearing a bandage.

4. A parent came to visit the first grade classroom. She was dressed in the garb worn in her native country, Sri Lanka. One student asked if she had any toes under her costume.

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP TEACHER INTERVIEW

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FOLLOW-UP TEACHER INTERVIEW

1. Did you have enough time to integrate global awareness adequately during the 1991-1992 school year?

   Yes No

2. Did you teach global awareness as an integrated curriculum?

   Yes No

3. Did you have foreign/non-white students enter your classroom since the implementation of the global\ awareness program?

   Yes No

   If yes, explain the attitudes of the other students and/or were there any problems?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. Do you feel the program was a fun way of teaching social studies?

   Yes No

5. Would you like to continue this thematic, integrated approach next year?

   Yes No

Comments: